

Colombia: Two shipments of grapes from the United States and Spain are sent back to their ports of origin

Two fresh grape shipments from the United States and Spain were intercepted by the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA) in the terminal ports of Cartagena and Buenaventura as they were infested by a pest.

The shipments were infested by the *Pseudococcus viburni* plague, more commonly known as the vine mealybug; a pest of economic importance for species such as apple, pear, grape and citrus. In total, 31,813 kilograms of grapes were intercepted and sent back to their ports of origin.

18,076 kilograms came from Spain and the rest (13,737 kilograms) from the United States. The entity took this decision as the country doesn't have this pest and if it came into the country it would seriously affect horticultural and ornamental crops, in addition to restricting the export of these products to other countries.

"This pest is a sucking insect that is located in the leaves and fruits of about eighty different plant families. These insects, which are considered vectors of leafrollers viruses (GLRaVs) in grapevines, clump together and form colonies, which together with some species of ants create a symbiosis and reduce the productive capacity of plants by direct and side effects, respectively," explained the ICA's General Manager.

The official added that the pest was detected through the permanent actions taken by the entity in its first barrier functions, which includes phytosanitary control of agricultural imports at ports, airports and border crossings , in order to protect plant and animal health in the country and, therefore, to maintain its health status.

Source : ICA

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